**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) A ceramic carrier comprising a ceramic substrate and a multitude of pores or elements that directly support a catalyst component on the surface of the ceramic substrate, wherein:

the catalyst component contains metal elements having NOx absorbent capacity;

the pores that directly support the catalyst component comprise at least one kind selected from the group consisting of defects in the ceramic crystal lattice, microscopic cracks in the ceramic surface and missing defects of the elements that constitute the ceramic, and the elements that directly support the catalyst component are elements that substitute for a part of the constituent elements of the substrate ceramic; and

~~The ceramic carrier according to claim 1~~, wherein defects in the ceramic crystal lattice, which constitute the pores ~~capable of directly supporting~~that directly support the catalyst component, are formed and NOx absorbent capacity is given by substituting a part of the constituent elements of the ceramic with the metal elements having NOx absorbent capacity.

4. (Currently amended) The ceramic carrier according to ~~claim 1~~claim 3, wherein NOx absorbent capacity is given by supporting the metal elements ~~which~~ that have NOx absorbent capacity in the pores ~~capable of directly supporting~~that directly support the catalyst component.

5. (Currently amended) The ceramic carrier according to ~~claim 1~~claim 3, wherein the metal element having NOx absorbent capacity is an alkali metal element, an alkali earth metal element, a rare earth element or a transition metal element.

6. (Currently amended) The ceramic carrier according to ~~claim 1~~claim 3, wherein the ~~substrate~~ ceramic substrate includes cordierite as the major component.

7. (Currently amended) The ceramic carrier according to ~~claim 1~~claim 3, wherein the carrier has a form of at least one kind selected ~~from among a group~~from the group consisting of a honeycomb, pellets, powder, a foam body, a fiber and a hollow fiber.

8. (Currently amended) A ceramic carrier comprising a ceramic substrate and a multitude of pores or elements that directly support a catalyst component on the surface of the ceramic substrate, wherein:

the catalyst component contains metal elements having NOx absorbent capacity;

the pores that directly support the catalyst component comprise at least one kind selected from the group consisting of defects in the ceramic crystal lattice, microscopic cracks in the ceramic surface and missing defects of the elements that constitute the ceramic, and the elements that directly support the catalyst component are elements that substitute for a part of the constituent elements of the substrate ceramic; and

~~The ceramic carrier according to claim 1, wherein~~ the pores ~~which can~~that directly support the catalyst component have a diameter or width 1000 times the diameter of ~~the catalyst ion~~ an ion of the catalyst to be supported or smaller, and the density of pores is $1\times10^{11}$/L or higher.

9. (Currently amended) A ceramic catalyst body comprising the ceramic carrier of ~~claim 1~~claim 3 and a catalyst component supported directly on the surface the ceramic ~~carrier~~ substrate without forming a coating layer.

10. (Original) The ceramic catalyst body according to claim 9, wherein the catalyst is supported in the vicinity of the metal elements having NOx absorbent capacity.

11. (Original) The ceramic catalyst body according to claim 9 wherein the catalyst component is a noble metal.

12. (New) The ceramic carrier according to claim 8, wherein NOx absorbent capacity is given by supporting the metal elements that have NOx absorbent capacity in the pores that directly support the catalyst component.

13. (New) The ceramic carrier according to claim 8, wherein the metal element having NOx absorbent capacity is an alkali metal element, an alkali earth metal element, a rare earth element or a transition metal element.

14. (New) The ceramic carrier according to claim 8, wherein the ceramic substrate includes cordierite as the major component.

15. (New) The ceramic carrier according to claim 8, wherein the carrier has a form of at least one kind selected from the group consisting of a honeycomb, pellets, powder, a foam body, a fiber and a hollow fiber.

16. (New) A ceramic catalyst body comprising the ceramic carrier of claim 8 and a catalyst component supported directly on the surface the ceramic substrate without forming a coating layer.

17. (New) The ceramic catalyst body according to claim 16, wherein the catalyst is supported in the vicinity of the metal elements having NOx absorbent capacity.

18. (New) The ceramic catalyst body according to claim 16 wherein the catalyst component is a noble metal.